

DAILY DOCTRINE: Testing: the Ten Tests of the Exodus Generation: Test #3, the Complaining Test  
<http://www.fbcweb.org/Doctrines/10-tests-3.pdf>

1. Review.
  - a. Test #1: **Fear test** at the Red Sea as the Israelites were caught between the Pharaoh's army and the Red Sea. The issue: Will the believer trust the Lord when he faces danger?
  - b. Test #2: **Bitterness test** at the waters of Marah, Exod. 15:23-26. The issue: Will the believer remove the bitter things of life through a relationship with God?
2. Test #3: **Grumbling at the details of life test, Exod. 16.** Will the believer appreciate the blessings God has provided, or will he grip and complain about uncomfortable details of life?
  - ✓ **Exodus 16:1** Then they set out from Elim, and all the congregation of the sons of Israel came to the wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after their departure from the land of Egypt. <sup>2</sup> And the whole congregation of the sons of Israel **grumbled** against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. <sup>3</sup> And the sons of Israel said to them, "Would that we had died by the LORD's hand in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the pots of meat, when we ate bread to the full; for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger." <sup>4</sup> Then the LORD said to Moses, "Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a day's portion every day, that I may test them, whether or not they will walk in My instruction. <sup>5</sup> "And it will come about on the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather daily." <sup>6</sup> So Moses and Aaron said to all the sons of Israel, "At evening you will know that the LORD has brought you out of the land of Egypt; <sup>7</sup> and in the morning you will see the glory of the LORD, for **He hears your grumblings against the LORD; and what are we, that you grumble against us?**" <sup>8</sup> And Moses said, "*This will happen* when the LORD gives you meat to eat in the evening, and bread to the full in the morning; for **the LORD hears your grumblings which you grumble against Him.** And what are we? **Your grumblings are not against us but against the LORD.**" <sup>9</sup> Then Moses said to Aaron, "Say to all the congregation of the sons of Israel, 'Come near before the LORD, for **He has heard your grumblings.**'"

3. The Hebrew verb for “grumble” in the above passage is *lun* ( לָחַן ), which refers to resentment, dissatisfaction, anger, and complaint by grumbling in half-muted tones of hostile opposition to God’s plan for one’s life. Exodus 16 makes it clear that whether a person verbalizes this complaint to God or to His spiritually delegated leader or anyone else, the essence of all complaining is against God Himself. What’s more: This complaining is taken by God as disbelief and open rebellion against Him: disbelief that He knows what is best for you (testing to get you to trust Him and be grateful) and rebellion because you are going against His plan for your life.
4. Make careful note in the passage that from a human perspective (i.e. human viewpoint) these Israelites had plenty to complain about: they were famished; they were experiencing severe privation of food—they were faced with the “threat” of starvation in the desert! This was a life or death issue that was impossible for them to solve. However, they sinned because they doubted God and cast aspersion on His justice, goodness, and power. Had they *logically* applied His Word, they would have realized that God did not bring them out in the desert to slaughter. As long as they were alive, God had a plan for them.
5. Friendly pastoral advice: Next time you find yourself griping and complaining about “your” lot in life, just stop. Stop and reflect on the nature of your carnality, your present ingratitude and disorientation to God and His marvelous and matchless grace, and how your complaining has far less justification than the Israelites facing starvation in the desert. You may feel like you have justification in your complaints, and you may even fool others into agreeing with you. However, you are not fooling God. God knows exactly what you need, and loves you. He loves you way too much to be part of any attempt to make you into a spoiled child (*brat*). Just confess your sinful attitude and get back in fellowship where you are able to give thanks **in all** things and **for all** things.
  - **1 Thessalonians 5:18 in everything** give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. <sup>19</sup> Do not quench the Spirit;
  - **Ephesians 5:18-20 . . .** but be filled with the Spirit . . . always giving thanks **for all things** in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father;
5. Stay in fellowship by applying Bible doctrine to the challenges of life, and let Him create in you the spiritual virtue of unconditional gratitude. Each must make her own choice. My hope is that your life will fill out the disjunctive syllogism in the following manner: (G=life of gratitude; C= life of complaining):

$$\begin{array}{r} G \vee C \\ \underline{-C} \\ G \end{array}$$

**In the Logos,**

*Pastor Don*